Sl. No.	Name of High Court	No. of courts functioning
15.	Maharashtra	94
16.	Manipur	2
17.	Meghalaya	—
18.	Mizoram	—
19.	Nagaland	—
20.	Orissa	17
21.	Punjab	—
22.	Rajasthan	40
23.	Sikkim	—
24.	Tamil Nadu	—
25.	Tripura	2
26.	Uttaranchal	30
27.	Uttar Pradesh	150
28.	West Bengal	6
		542

Comprehensive Bill on Electoral Reforms

†851. SHRIMATI BASANTI SARMA: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have framed any comprehensive Bill on electoral reforms in view of the present conditions in the counry;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) by when the said Bill is likely to be introduced?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) to (d) The process of reform of electoral laws is a continuous and ongoing process. It is necessary to evolve a consensus among the political parties if a comprehensive legislation for electoral reforms is to be brought forward, which is a time consuming process. Hence, the Government has been bringing forward various legislations to enact proposals in this regard as and when political consensus has been reached on different issues so that the

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

process of reform of electoral laws continues. Some of the laws enacted in this regard are: The Presidential and Vice-Presidential Elections (Amendment) Act, 1997, the Representation of the People (Amendment) Act, 1998 and the Representation of the People (Amendment) Act, 1999. further, the Election Laws (Amendment) Bill, 1999, seeking to provide for an additional facility to the members of the Armed Forces etc. to vote through the system of proxy at elections, is pending in Lok Sabha for consideration and passing. The Government has also given a notice for introduction in the current session of Rajya Sabha of a new Bill, namely, the Representation of the People (Amendment) Bill, 2001 seeking to substitute open ballot system in place of the existing secret ballot system in elections to the Council of States and to do away with the requirement of residence of a particular state/Union territory for contesting election to the Council of States from that State/Union territory.

Setting up of a Permanent Lok Adalat

852. SHRI C.P. THIRUNAVUKKARASU: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government plan to set-up a permanent Lok Adalat for cases relating to public utilities;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government are proposing to set-up any other forum to settle the disputes relating to public utilities; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) and (b) pursuant to the decision taken in the First Annual Meet of the State Legal Services Authorities held under the aegis of National Legal Services Authority, Permanent and Continuous Lok Adalats were being set up in Government Departments and Statutory Bodies in Delhi. Such Lok Adalats have been set up in Delhi for Municipal Corporation of Delhi, Delhi Development Authority, Delhi Vidyut Board, Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd., New Delhi Municipal Committee, General Insurance Corporation, etc. Similarly, it has been impressed upon the State Legal Services Authorities to get such Lok Adalats established in all State Government Departments and governmental organizations, which are involved in large scale litigation with citizens. The same is in the process of being set up.

(c) and (d) Government has not so far taken final decision in the matter.